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ABSTRACT

In this Learning Activity Packet (LAP) students, mostly in small groups, analyze and compare a few major features of the Canadian and American governments. The LAP is divided into six learning objectives: 1) Both the United States and Canada are sovereign nations. What is sovereignty? What are nations?; 2) People throughout the world are governed in many ways. Canada and the U.S. are very much alike.; 3) What is a leader? What kinds of leadership exists in your group? How does a leader gain his position? In what ways is a leader needed? Nations have leaders. What do they do? In what different styles do they lead? Are all leaders good leaders? Why not?; 4) If people are to live under governments, how do they protect themselves from allowing the leaders and government from becoming too powerful?; 5) How are leaders chosen? How do you choose the leaders of your group? How do countries choose their leaders? U.S. and Canada? State or province?; and, 6) What is federalism? How does it work? What are similarities between the two countries. Each objective is accompanied by suggested learning activities. Some other LAPs are SO 006 140-145. (OPH)

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CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES-GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL PARTIES - A COMPARISON

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Rationale

Americans and Canadians both believe that they live in a free democratic nation. Both have a representative type of government with elected officials acting for the people.

The two nations developed with a common British heritage. On the one hand, Canada, has copied the English system of government and has remained within the Commonwealth of Nations - a cooperative group of former English colonies. On the other hand, the United States separated from Great Britain in the Revolutionary War, used English ideas and customs as a background and developed a different system using ideas of the day and practices tried out during the colonial period.

Both nations have a federal structure, which includes a national government with major subdivisions called states in the United States and provinces in Canada.

Political parties have become an essential part of both countries in the election process.

In this LAP you will work mostly in small groups and examine a few of the major factors in these two governments.

SO 006 145

Objective 1

Both the United States and Canada are sovereign nations. What is sovereignty? What are nations?

Activity 1

After reading The Discoverers, p. 42-49, name three (3) explorers and trace their areas of explorations. The area included is the present New England and eastern Canadian regions.

Activity 2

Given a blank map, and using p. 53 of New France, shade with a color key the French and English settlements by 1760. Explain to your group the reasons for portions of this area being in dispute.

Activity 3

Discuss with a small group the following questions: What is the way in which a family is governed? Do all families function in the same way? How do families compare with nations?

Activity 4

After a century of being a British colony, Canada gained her sovereignty through an evolutionary process. In 1867 Canada took a giant step in this direction with the passage of the

British North American Act. This act usually called the BNA Act is really the Canadian constitution. This act named the new country the Dominion of Canada which then began its way toward full independence. Though loosely tied to Great Britain, Canada began to act independently with other nations. It has really been since the Statute of Westminster of 1931 that Canada has acted as a full sovereign nation with the other nations. Even today, she, by choice, shares the monarch (king or queen) with Great Britain. Thus Elizabeth II is also Queen of Canada.

The United States declared its independence in 1776 and concluded its war for independence in 1783 with the Treaty of Paris. The new nation slowly gained recognition as a sovereign nation after a few years of proving its ability to survive.

Using the above statement make a time line which shows the comparison of the United States and Canada in the development of sovereignty from the time both were colonies of England.

Objective 2

People throughout the world are governed in many ways. Canada and the United States are very much alike.

Activity 1

Using an encyclopedia or another source look up the definition of democracy. How are systems democratic? Democracy functions through our elected representatives - the President and Vice President, congressmen, senators and the like; in Canada, the members of parliament, etc. Thus both countries are democracies and have a representative system.

Activity 2

In your small group discuss these questions:

What is government?
What kinds of government are there?
What similarities are there between the governments of the United States and Canada?
How does a country start its government?

Look at Harrington, How People Live in Canada, p. 56-68

Activity 3

Using transparency #2 mark on it with a transparency marker showing the matching role for each part of the two governments.

Activity 4

Using the two pie graphs which show the spending of each country in the early 70's, discuss with your group the comparison

of uses. What does it tell you about the goals and responsibilities of each country?

Activity 5

With a friend plan to change a law in both countries. Use the chart of p. 58 of How People Live in Canada and the transparency #8 on the American process. Each one of you take a different country and explain to the other the steps to be taken. The law might be:

> A law to provide a moratorium (to stop for a while) on deer hunting for one year in order to restore the deer population.

Another might be:

> A law to limit the school week to four days in order to provide for more teaching materials with the saving in salaries and costs of school plant operations from the fifth day.

Or one of your choice.

Objective 3

What is a leader? What kinds of leadership have you seen in your group? How does a leader gain his position? In what way is a leader needed? Nations have leaders. What do they do? In what different "styles" do they lead? Are all leaders good leaders? Why not?

Activity 1

Form a small group and discuss these ideas of leadership. What are the qualities of leadership needed for each of these groups?

a. your classroom
b. football team
c. people stranded on an uninhabited island
d. a club
e. the government

Which qualities appear to be the same? How do people become leaders? Who are the government leaders you know of and at what levels of government do they lead? In what way do they do their jobs well?

Activity 2

Many countries have a "head of state" as the single national leader; some have more than one leader. Using an encyclopedia name the heads of state and their titles for the United States and Canada and for 5 additional countries.

Activity 3

Some nations have a head of state who is also the head of the government. In other countries these positions are separated. Using 2 transparencies, #5 and #6, and their overlays dealing with this topic point out 4 or 5 specific differences between the United States and Canada covering such topics as duties, responsibilities, appointment, etc.

Objective 4

If people are to live under governments, how do they protect themselves from allowing the leaders and the government from becoming too powerful.

Activity 1

In your small group, discuss these questions:

How do people feel about rules?
What is good about rules?
What rules do you have at home? Good? Bad?
What rights do you have at home?
What rules are there at school?

Activity 2

Both Canada and the United States are nations whose governments are defined in their constitutions. Among its purposes the United States Constitution (1787) provides for the organization, operation, and duties of the government while the British North America Act (1867) carries out a similar function for Canada.

The BNA Act was an act of the British Parliament. There are "branches" of government in both countries:

Executive	Administers the government carries out the law
Lesiglative	makes the law
Judicial	interprets the laws

In the United States the three branches are clearly separate. This system is called "separation of powers". The separation of power is aided by another important principle known as "checks and balances" and it works to prevent any one of the three branches from becoming too powerful.

However, in Canada it is the parliamentary system which provides for "checks". The executive and legislative branches are merged. The opposition political party, called Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, acts as a check on the majority (Her Majesty's Government).

Use transparency #4 and discuss with your group the manner in which each system works.

Activity 3

Both countries have common ties with Great Britain. The civil rights and freedoms they enjoy as democracies come from centuries of struggle to express these rights in law. With the

following portions of documents compare the ancient law with current American and Canadian constitutional laws.

1. Magna Carta, June 15, 1215

"No free man shall be taken or imprisoned or disposed, or outlawed, or banished...except by the legal judgement of his peers or by the law of the land."

Canadian Bill of Rights, August 10, 1960

"No law of Canada shall be construed or applied so as to

(a) authorize or effect the arbitrary detention, imprisonment or exile of any person....."

U. S. Constitution, December 15, 1791

"In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed...."

2. The British Bill of Rights, 1688

"Subjects, which are Protestants, may provide and keep arms, for their common defense."

U. S. Constitution, 1791

Article 2

". . .the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, should not be infringed."

3. The British Bill of Rights, 1688

"Excessive bail ought not to be required, no excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted."

Canadian Bill of Rights, 1960

"...no law of Canada shall be construed or applied so as to

(b) impose or authorize the imposition of cruel and unusual treatment or punishment."

With two other people think up a situation where each of the three laws would give a citizen protection. Take one of the three and share your ideas with the other two students.

Activity 4

Using the chart on page 11 draw a line between Canada and the United States showing corresponding rights.

B I L L O F R I G H T S

CANADA 1960

Part 1

1. It is hereby recognized and declared that in Canada there have existed without discrimination by reason of race, national origin, colour, religion, or sex, the following human rights and fundamental freedoms, namely

(a) The right of the individual to life, liberty, security of the person and enjoyment of property, and the right not to be deprived thereof except by due process of law;

(b) the right of the individual to equality before the law;

(c) freedom of religion;

(d) freedom of speech;

(e) freedom of assembly and association; and

(f) freedom of the press.

UNITED STATES (1791 declared in force)

Article 1

Congress shall make no laws respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Objective 5

How are leaders chosen? How do you choose the leaders of your group? How do countries choose their leaders? United States and Canada? State or province?

Activity 1

Though political parties are not named in the United States Constitution they have come, almost from our country's earliest period, a necessary tool of the election process. The Canadian parliamentary system, like the British, is built around the idea of political parties.

Both countries have two major parties at the present time. Minor parties have greater numbers representing them in the Canadian Parliament than in the American Congress.

Parties 1972

United States	Canada
Democratic	Liberal
Republican	Progressive Conservative
American	New Democratic Party
Conservative	Ralliement de Crediste sociale (Social Credit Party)

The leaders of the Canadian parties are selected by a party caucus which is similar to the United States political convention. This does not occur at a regular time as in the

United States. The leader of the majority party becomes the Prime Minister. He is an elected member of the House of Commons and has been elected from a riding or Constituency (like our Congressional district). He is not elected by the country as a whole.

The leader of the largest minority party usually becomes the Leader of Opposition.

Having recently experienced the American conventions, compare the Canadian process with the American. How do the two systems differ? This may be in a group discussion.

Activity 2

Canada has no set dates for national or provincial elections. As long as the Federal Prime Minister or the provincial premier (something like the American state governor) can win majority votes in the Parliament or in the provincial legislative assemblies his party may remain in power. This can go on for only five years, however, and then, by law an election must be called.

The Prime Minister naturally wants to keep his government in power. For varied reasons he may call an election.

The time between his announcement to the actual election is usually six to seven weeks.

With this information write a paragraph comparing the

Canadian with the American election system.

Objective 6

What is federalism? How does it work? What are the similarities between the two countries?

Activity 1

Both the United States and Canada began when their political subdivisions were joined. The United States was formed at the merger of the 13 colonies in the days of the American Revolution. In Canada, the provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and East and west Canada (now Ontario and Quebec) joined in 1867. Each colony wished to retain its identity while becoming a part of the central national government. Federalism is the joining of the several states into a national government. The same process occurred in Canada. The states or provinces keep their own identity. Thus there are two levels of government (not counting county or local). Thus you live in Maine which is a part of the United States or in Nova Scotia which is a part of Canada.

Each state or province has its own political borders, laws, officers, and capital city. Each country also has a federal capital. As you know the United States has its national or federal capital in a special area, the District of Columbia -

Washington. Canada's capital, Ottawa, was selected by Queen Victoria. The states and provinces have responsibilities which are theirs alone. There are other responsibilities which they share with the national government. A third group of responsibilities, the largest, are those which are assigned to the national government alone.

As you are well aware, the Great Lakes are polluted. Who should clean them up - the states of the United States bordering upon them or the neighboring Canadian provinces? Yet other people in addition to those living in neighboring states and provinces also profit from the use of the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence Seaway. Who do you think should clean up the pollution in the Great Lakes? In what way does the federal character of the government of each country help or hinder solving this problem? Write a paragraph.

Activity 2

A province corresponds to a state. Each has its own capital, in this way they are each like their federal government. Our states have as their "chief-of-state" governors; the provinces, on the other hand, have two officials - a Lieutenant Governor, who is the Queen's representative, and the premier, who is elected as leader of his party at a party caucus.

After reading "The Provinces" in Canada, Giant of the North, p. 58-59, list 10 responsibilities of the provinces. Look at the United States Constitution. Compare the provincial responsibilities with the states.

Activity 3

Contrary to the hopes of the Founding Fathers of Canada, the provinces have much more power than originally intended. In the United States the opposite situation has taken place. In spite of the probable intent of the American Founding Fathers when writing the United States Constitution, our Federal government has taken an ever increasing role in former state affairs. This is condemned by some and praised by others. An example of this is the area of education. Though originally a state concern only, the federal government is now very much involved in education, even at the local level.

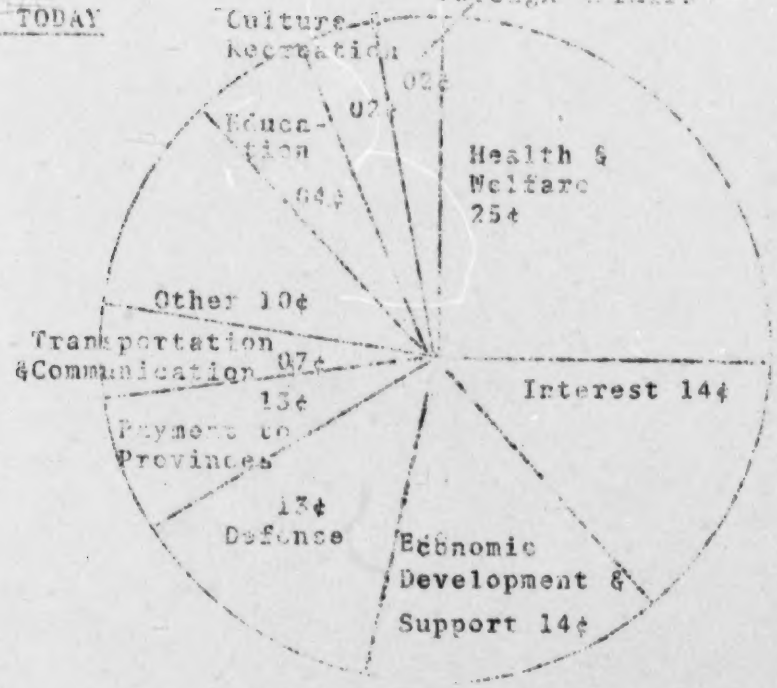
This LAP, for example, was partially written with funds from the Federal Government. Talk with your teacher or your principal about the federally sponsored educational projects in your town.

Discuss: What would be an advantage or disadvantage to the states to have the federal government providing funds and guide lines?

NATIONAL EXPENDITURES

From 1972
CANADA TODAY

Canada



United States

For period
ending 3/71